

THE 'MANUSCRIPTUS EVANGELIORUM ANTIQUISSIMUS' OF DANIEL HEINSIUS

(Vatic. Reg. gr. 79)*

I. THE IDENTIFICATION OF HEINSIUS' 'VERY OLD GOSPEL MANUSCRIPT'

While preparing a recent study of Daniel Heinsius' contribution to the Elzevier editions of the Greek New Testament,¹ we determined that in compiling his *Aristarchus sacer sive ad Nonni in Iohannem Metaphrasin* (Leiden, 1627), Heinsius occasionally consulted a Greek manuscript of the Gospels which he described as having a distinct physical arrangement. That is, in referring to the eighteen 'tituli' into which the Gospel of St John was anciently divided, he remarks: 'Quae in manuscripto meo Euangeliorum antiquissimo, modo in superiori, modo in inferiori parte paginae, ad verbum notata inuenias.'² Since there was no opportunity then to follow up this lead and devote a thorough investigation to the identity of the manuscript used, however, we were only able to determine that if his codex was to be sought among the New Testament manuscripts preserved in the University Library at Leiden, Heinsius was referring to Gron. 137. We have subsequently looked into the matter more closely, and the manuscript that Heinsius utilized turns out to be not Leiden Gron. 137, but Vatic. Reg. gr. 79.³

The grounds for this conclusion are what Heinsius has to say about his manuscript in two other passages in the *Aristarchus*:

(1) *Aristarchus sacer*, 'pars posterior', p. 250, on the *pericope de adultera*: 'Partem capitis octauum quare praetermiserit [sc. Nonnus], jam alij notarunt. [...] quae pars in antiquissimo Quatuor Euangeliorum codice, (quem nos, vt omnia nostra, viro summo & incomparabilis memoriae Iano Rutgersio, Fratri vnico, ille, Reuerendo, & eximiae tum eruditionis tum humanitatis viro, Andreae Riueto, acceptum ferebat) quemadmodum extat, ita multa variant in eo, neque pauca aliter, quanquam eodem fere sensu, leguntur.'

* My thanks are due to Professor Paul R. Sellin, University of California at Los Angeles, who corrected the English of this article and provided helpful criticism and valued suggestions.

¹ *Dan. Heinsius and the Textus Receptus of the New Testament* (Leiden, 1971), p. 44.

² *Aristarchus sacer*, 'pars posterior', p. 259; *Exercitationes sacrae*, p. 821.

³ The manuscript is quoted by J. J. Wetstenius, *Novum Testamentum Gr...* (Amstelædami, 1751-2), I, 'Prolegomena', p. 57 as 99, by C. R. Gregory, *Textkritik des N.T.* (Leipzig, 1909), p. 159, and F. H. A. Scrivener, *A Plain Introduction to the Criticism of the N.T.* (London-Cambridge, 1883), p. 200; (1894⁴), p. 403 as 155, and by Hermann von Soden, *Die Schriften des N.T. in ihrer ältesten erreichbaren Textgestalt...*, I. Teil, I. Abt (Göttingen, 1911), p. 60 and 192, as e 403. The MS is also mentioned by A. Birch, *Quatuor Evangelia Graece cum variantibus a textu lectionibus codd. mss. Bibl. Vaticanae...* (Hauniæ, 1788), p. xxvii; and *id.*, *Variae Lectiones ad Textum IV Evangeliorum ex Codd. Mss. Bibliothecae Vaticanae...* (Hauniæ, 1801), p. xxxi; and by P. Canart and V. Peri, *Sussidi bibliografici per i manoscritti greci della biblioteca vaticana* (Studi e testi 261) (C.d.V. 1970), p. 308.

[In the revision of the *Aristarchus sacer*, incorporated in the *Exercitationes sacrae* of 1639, Heinsius changed the words 'omnia nostra' into 'alia non pauca' and the passage 'viro summo... Fratri vnico' into 'viro nobilissimo, beatae nunc memoriae, Iano Rutgersio, affini suauissimo' (p. 816).]

(2) *Aristarchus sacer*, 'pars posterior', p. 369, on ἔτι in John iv. 35: 'Testatur Robertus Stephanus, in nonnullis codicibus vocem ἔτι non extare. Et affirmat Camerarius, in suo codice, οὐχ ὑμεῖς λέγετε, ὅτι τετράμηνός ἐστι, καὶ ὁ θερισμός ἐρχεται, se inuenisse. neque aliter in MS antiquissimo Rutgersiano inueni.'¹ [Instead of 'Et affirmat', 1639 reads (p. 882): ': affirmat autem'.]

The information about Heinsius' gospel manuscript revealed by the *Aristarchus sacer* thus consists of the following:

- (a) Heinsius received it from his brother-in-law Janus Rutgersius.
- (b) Rutgers had gotten it from Andreas Rivetus, Professor of Divinity at Leiden from 1620 on.
- (c) It contained the *pericope de adultera*, but with numerous variant readings which, however, did not affect the sense of the passage.
- (d) It presented the eighteen 'tituli' of John sometimes at the top, sometimes at the foot of the pages.
- (e) Its reading of John iv. 35 conformed to the text of Camerarius' manuscript quoted above (under 2), for the word ἔτι is lacking in both manuscripts.

The particulars listed under (a) and (b) in themselves suffice to warrant the conclusion that the gospel codex of Heinsius was Vatic. Reg. gr. 79. On a leaf preceding the Greek text, this manuscript contains the following inscription:²

*Ampliss. Viro D. J.
Rutgersio, serenissimi
Regis Suetiae apud Jllustriss.
ordines foederati Belgij
Legato, observantiae suae
hoc qualecumque pignus D D.
Andreas Rivetus.*

As comparison with autograph letters by Rivetus clearly shows, the signature *Andreas Rivetus* as well as the inscription as a whole is in the hand of Andreas Rivetus himself.³

¹ References to the 'codex meus Graecus antiquissimus' occur as well in the *Exerc. sacrae*, see for example *ad* John i. 6.

² A faulty transcript of this inscription appears in J. M. A. Scholz, *Biblich-Kritische Reise...* (Leipzig-Sorau, 1823), p. 100, and in H. Stevenson, *Bibliothecae Apost. Vaticanae codices mss. graeci Reginae Suecorum...* (Rome, 1888), p. 63. As far as we can gather from our microfilm of the MS, the inscription of Rivetus has been written over the erasure of an older inscription that is undecipherable.

³ E.g. Leiden, Univ. Libr. B.P.L. 26B, 1-3. Cf. also the facsimile facing p. 164 in H. J. Honders, *Andreas Rivetus als invloedrijk gereformeerd theoloog in Holland's bloeitijd* (thesis Leiden, 1930) ('s-Gravenhage, 1930).

Furthermore, the information mentioned under (c), (d) and (e) is fully confirmed by the contents of Vatic. Reg. gr. 79. In John vii. 53 – viii. 11 (fo. 256r–v) the text of the manuscript varies in ten places from what Heinsius himself was later to call the *textus ab omnibus receptus*.¹ In all these cases the manuscript presents Caesarean, Alexandrian, Western or alternative Byzantine readings (all of which have been registered in the apparatus criticus of the *Synopsis* of Aland) in lieu of the *textus receptus*. Moreover, of the eighteen ‘tituli’ of John noted in the margins, ten have been written in the upper margin, eight at the foot of the pages, and in John iv. 35 the manuscript reads οὐχ ὑμεῖς λέγετε, ὅτι τετράμηνός ἐστι, καὶ ὁ θερισμός ἐρχεται (fo. 242v), exactly what Heinsius says he has found ‘in MSS antiquissimo Rutgersiano’. In the light of all this, it is absolutely certain that the ‘very old manuscript of the gospels’ used by Dan. Heinsius is Vatic. Reg. gr. 79.

II. THE HISTORY OF HEINSIUS’ GOSPEL CODEX FROM 1620 TO 1689

Besides the Rivetus inscription, one also finds the autograph ex libris ‘Nicolai Heinsii’ in Vatic. Reg. gr. 79 (fo. 9r). Hence the route which this codex took from Leiden to the Vatican is clear. Beginning with the library of Rivetus, it passed successively through the collections of Jo(h)annes Rutgers(ius), Daniel Heinsius, Nicolaas Heinsius, Queen Christina of Sweden and Cardinal Pietro Ottoboni.

Jan Rutgers (1589–1625) became a *consiliarius* to King Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden in 1614,² and in 1617 gave his only sister Ermgard in marriage to Daniel Heinsius (1585–1655), whose influence had helped him to favour at the Sweden court. During his diplomatic career, Rutgers served on five embassies to the States General at The Hague, *viz.*: (1) from May 1616 to the beginning of 1617; (2) from August 1617 to January 1618; (3) from February 1618 to the beginning of 1619; (4) from September 1621 to July 1622; (5) from 1623 (not before March) to his death in October 1625, this fifth mission being of a permanent character.

¹ [Dan. Heinsius], ‘Typographi lectoribus de hac editione’, in *Novum Testamentum. Ex Regiis aliisque optimis editionibus, hac nova expressum*:... (Lugd. Batavorum, 1633), fo. *2v.

² On J. Rutgers(ius), see his autobiography in Chr. Gryphius (ed.), *Vitae selectae XVIII. eruditissimorum hominum* (Vratislaviae, 1739), pp. 162–9, esp. 167–8. Rutgers does not mention Rivetus. See also Fr. Sweertius, *Athenae Belgicae sive nomenclator*... (Antverpiae, 1628), p. 383; Nicéron, *Mémoires pour servir à l’histoire des hommes illustres*... , xxxii (Paris, 1735), 139–46; Jöcher III, col. 2326 (A.H. Sw.); Hoefer, *Nouvelle biographie générale*... , 42 (Paris, 1863), col. 932; A. J. van der Aa, *Biographisch Woordenboek der Nederlanden*... , Nieuwe Uitg. 16 (Haarlem s.a.), pp. 576–7; *Allgemeine Deutsche Biographie* 30 (Leipzig, 1890), pp. 42–4; A. Reifferscheid, *Briefe G. M. Lingelsheims, M. Bernegggers*... (Heilbronn, 1889), ‘Verzeichnis der Personen und Sachen’, p. 1036, *sub* Rutgersius. Speaking of Rutgersius’ library, Dan. Heinsius states: ‘quo amplio rem nemo ac instructio rem unquam bibliothecam his habuit’, *ep. ad G. M. Lingelsheimium* 30 January 1626, ed. Reifferscheid, *op. cit.* p. 243; cf. also p. 234.

Since Andreas Rivetus¹ did not arrive in Holland until September 1620, the manuscript is not likely to have come into Rutgers' hands until some time either during the latter's fourth embassy, September 1621 to July 1622, or during his last stay at The Hague between the spring of 1623 and his death in October 1625. We know nothing of the circumstances of Rivetus' presentation, nor is the exact nature of the relationship between Rivetus and Rutgers clear. As far as we can tell, the inscription in Vatic. Reg. gr. 79 is the only evidence of such ties,² though contact between the two men was undoubtedly furthered by the common interests and activities that Heinsius shared with the distinguished Huguenot theologian at Leiden in the years following the Synod of Dort. However this may be, the manuscript must soon have come into Heinsius' possession, for Heinsius obviously had it at his disposal for some period of time before 1627,³ the year in which his *Aristarchus sacer* appeared, and chances are that it was among the possessions devolving to Heinsius as Rutgers' brother-in-law and only heir in 1625.⁴ As late as 1639 Daniel Heinsius seems still to have owned the manuscript, for his emendation of the passages cited above regarding the 'codex Rutgersianus' in the revised *Aristarchus* suggests nothing to the contrary.

Several years before his death (1655), however, Daniel clearly had given his 'codex Evangeliorum antiquissimus' to his son Nicolaas, for not later than 1654-5 it figures in the *Catalogus librorum Ser. Reginae Suetiae qui Antverpiae reperiuntur*, compiled when the Queen's library had been transported to Antwerp (1654), on its journey to Rome.⁵ This so-called Antwerp catalogue, preserved in the manuscript Vatic. lat. 8171,⁶ offers, on f. 155r, the following entries:

[fourth title:] 'Evangelia Graece'.

[fifth title:] 'Item aliud exemplar antiquissimum', [to which another seventeenth-century hand⁷ has added:] 'In 12 magn., membran., fuit Nic. Heinsii.'⁸

¹ On Rivetus, see Honders, *Rivetus* and A. G. van Opstal, *André Rivet, een invloedrijk hugenoot aan het hof van Fred. Hendrik* (thesis Free University, Amsterdam, 1937) (Harderwijk, 1937). Neither of these works mentions Rutgers.

² The *Inventaire de la correspondance d'André Rivet (1595-1650)* (Archives internationales d'histoire des idées 43) (La Haye, 1971), drawn up by P. Dibon, E. Estourgie and H. Bots, mentions not a single letter from or to Rutgers.

³ The *Aristarchus* was in the press in June 1626 at the latest, see Heinsius' *ep. ad J. Cabeliavium* 21 June 1626, *ap. Reifferscheid, Briefe*, p. 253: 'Aristarchus, sive Exercitationes sacrae hic excunduntur.'

⁴ P. R. Sellin, *Daniel Heinsius and Stuart England* (Leiden, 1968), pp. 55-6.

⁵ On this catalogue see Mrs J. Bignami Odier, 'Le fonds de la reine à la Bibliothèque Vaticane', *Collectanea Vaticana in honorem Anselmi M. Card. Alberada a Bibliotheca Apostolica edita* (Studi e testi 219), pp. 170[14]-171[15].

⁶ We consulted the catalogue in Leiden, Univ. Libr., microfilm r 81. A contemporary copy of the catalogue is to be found at Oxford, Bodl. Libr. MS Orvilliani, x 1.2.10.

⁷ The hand of this so-called 'Librarius Antverpiensis' has never been identified. See Mrs J. Bignami Odier, *art. cit.* pp. 170[14]-171[15].

⁸ According to Stevenson (*op. cit.*), Vatic. Reg. gr. 79 is not a duodecimo, but an octavo. Mgr P. Canart kindly informs me by letter of 20 August 1972 that 'Les mesures du ms. sont 155 × 117 mm.'

There is no doubt, therefore, that Heinsius' manuscript belonged to Christina's library at least as early as November 1653, when her books left Stockholm. From a letter of Nicolaas Heinsius to J. F. Gronovius, written on 5 September 1650, we know indeed that before that date Nicolaas had given his manuscripts to Christina.¹ In October–November 1649 Nicolaas had entered the Queen's service. He was at Stockholm from October–November 1649 to March 1650 and from June 1650 to the beginning (February?) of 1651.² During the latter of these terms Nicolaas gave his manuscripts to Christina, among them his father's codex of the gospels. Precisely what motivated Daniel to allow his son, who was no zealot about theological matters,³ to carry the manuscript north remains speculation, though one can readily guess that by this present the elder Heinsius hoped to improve the chance of recovering the fortune that Queen Christina's predecessors had several times acknowledged as due to Rutgers and the Heinsii but never restored.⁴ If so, Nicolaas' gesture merely added the manuscript to the family losses at the hands of an irresponsible crown.

It has been asserted, however, that the codex in question had already been listed in the oldest inventory of Her Majesty's library, the so-called Stockholm catalogue, compiled under the guidance of Isaac Vossius in about 1650 and preserved in Ms. Stockholm, Kungl. Biblioteket U 202.1,⁵ in which the Queen's manuscript collection is recorded such as it was at the end of 1649.⁶ Recently a beautiful facsimile edition of the Stockholm catalogue has been published;⁷ since, upon repeated examination, it proves to contain no entry corresponding to Vatic. Reg. gr. 79, the assertion that this manuscript was registered in the Stockholm catalogue must be a mistake.

The Stockholm catalogue of c. 1650 and that of Antwerp of c. 1655 were followed by a third list of Christina's manuscript collection, drawn up (or at least completed) by the Benedictines of St.-Maur resident at Rome.⁸ The

¹ F. F. Blok, *Nicolaas Heinsius in dienst van Christina van Zweden* (thesis Leiden, 1949) (Delft, 1949), pp. 81, 196 and 320–1. From the letter of Nic. Heinsius to Gronovius dated 5 September 1650 (Burman, *Sylloge* . . ., III, 243), Blok quotes: 'Ego meos, suos [Is.] Vossius, Reginae donavimus, quibus libris in unum congestis futurum est, ut regia bibliotheca codicibus scriptis egregie instruat.'.

² Blok, *op. cit.* pp. 68–9, 75, 80 and 89.

³ *Ibid.* p. 28.

⁴ Described in Sellin, *Heinsius*, pp. 52–60.

⁵ Mrs J. Bignami Odier, *art. cit.* p. 162 n. 3: 'Le Reg. graec. 79 et le Reg. lat. 1727 proviennent de Janus Rutgersius et sont déjà inscrits au catalogue de Stockholm.' The remark is correct for Reg. lat. 1727, not for Reg. gr. 79. Mrs Bignami Odier is also wrong in designating Janus Rutgersius as 'grand-père' of Nicolaas Heinsius, p. 162 n. 3, and in speaking of the latter as belonging to the second generation from Rutgers, p. 162.

⁶ Chr. Callmer, *Catalogus codicum manu scriptorum bibliothecae regiae Holmiensis c. annum MDCL ductu et auspicio Isaac Vossii conscriptus* . . . (Acta Bibliothecae Regiae Stockholmiensis XI) (Stockholm, 1971), p. xii.

⁷ Chr. Callmer, *op. cit.*

⁸ On this catalogue see Mrs Bignami Odier, 'Le fonds de la reine . . .', p. 172[16], n. 6; *eadem*, 'Manuscripts', in *Christina Queen of Sweden – a personality of European civilisation* (Nationalmuseum Utställningskatalog 305) (Stockholm, 1966), p. 532 (reference due to C. Doelman, Rotterdam); A. Raes, 'Avertissement', in *Les manuscrits de la reine de Suède au Vatican, réédition du Catalogue de Montfaucon et cotes actuelles* (Studi e testi 238) (C. d. V., 1964), p. 6.

library had finally been installed in the Palazzo Riario, on the Vatican side of the Tiber below the Janiculum, in January 1663. This catalogue, begun in 1672 and finished between 1680 and 1689, was not published until 1739 by Bernard de Montfaucon in his *Bibliotheca Bibliothecarum Manuscriptorum Nova*, Tomus primus (Parisii, 1739),¹ and reprinted by J. P. Migne in 1853.² In 1964 De Montfaucon's list was republished with cross-references for each item to its present signature. The manuscript identified as Vatic. Reg. gr. 79 is De Montfaucon's number 873, described as 'Evangelia Graece'.

Thus the history of Heinsius' gospel codex may be summarized as follows:

About 1620: in the possession of Rivetus.

Between 1620 and 1625: donated by Rivetus to Rutgersius (The Hague).

About 1625: used by Dan. Heinsius (Leiden) who probably inherited it from Rutgersius (†1625).

From 1625 to 1639: in the possession of Dan. Heinsius.

Between 1639 and 1650, perhaps around 1649: ceded by Daniel Heinsius to his son Nicolaas.

Between October 1649 and September 1650: donated by Nic. Heinsius to Christina (Stockholm) and embodied in her collection, in the vicissitudes of which it henceforth shares.

1653-4: transport of Christina's library, via Göteborg and Denmark, to Antwerp.

1655: catalogued at Antwerp.

1663: installed in the Palazzo Riario in Rome.

Between 1680 and 1689: catalogued by the Benedictines at Rome.

After the death of the Queen (19 April 1689), a complete inventory of the Palazzo Riario, including the library, was drawn up for her executor, the Cardinal Decio Azzolino. The Cardinal died on 8 June of the same year, and his nephew Pompeo Azzolino sold the library to Cardinal Pietro Ottoboni. On 6 October 1689 Ottoboni was elected pope as Alexander VIII. In a flourish of generosity the Pope donated all the manuscripts (except for 240 items which he retained and which are at present included in the Ottoboni collection) to the Library and Archives of the Vatican.³

III. THE RELATION OF HEINSIUS' GOSPEL CODEX TO THE ELZEVIER TEXT

In one respect the examination of Vatic. Reg. gr. 79 proved to be a disappointment. In an earlier study⁴ we argued that it is exceedingly probable that Daniel Heinsius was the editor of the Greek New Testament text published by the Elzeviers in 1633. Now the edition of 1633 differs hundreds of times from the first Elzevier edition, of 1624, but of real variant readings

¹ Not 1793, as stated by Raes, *op. cit.* p. 6. In De Montfaucon's *Bibliotheca...* the 'Catalogus Manuscriptorum Codicum Bibliothecae Reginae Sueciae in Vaticana' begins on p. 14 (tom. 1); on p. 32 one reads: '873. Evangelia Graece'. The numbers 868, 877 and 885 have the same title. We do not know exactly why 873 has been identified with Vatic. Reg. gr. 79 and not one of the other items of the same title.

² Thus Raes, *op. cit.* p. 6.

³ For the last paragraph we depend on Mrs J. Bignami Odier, 'Manuscripts', p. 530.

⁴ *Dan. Heinsius and the Textus Receptus...*

one finds but twelve instances,¹ six of which occur in the gospels. We should have liked to adduce some new evidence in favour of our hypothesis that Heinsius indeed edited the Elzevier Greek Testament of 1633, by tracing the six readings in which the gospel text of this edition departs from that of 1624 back to the manuscript that Heinsius had in his hands. But to assign any of the variant readings of Elzevier 1633 to the influence of Vatic. Reg. gr. 79 seems impossible. In only three out of the six passages where the editor of 1633 changed the Elzevier text of 1624, the reading of 1633 agrees with that of the manuscript:

	Elz. 1624	Elz. 1633 and Vatic. Reg. gr. 79
Mark iv. 18	οὔτοί εἰσιν	<i>om.</i>
Luke xii. 20	ἄφρων	ἄφρον
John iii. 6	γεγεννημένον	γεγεννημένον

Although Elzevier 1633 and Vatic. Reg. gr. 79 have these three readings in common against Elzevier 1624, their agreement in these instances is unfortunately rather insignificant – the readings occur as well in the Complutensian Polyglot, for example. What is more significant is the fact that in three other places where Elzevier 1624 agrees with Vatic. Reg. gr. 79, the common reading was abandoned in 1633:

	Elz. 1624 and Vatic. Reg. gr. 79	Elz. 1633
Mark viii. 24	ὅτι <i>et</i> ὁρῶ	<i>om.</i>
Luke xi. 33	κρυπτήν	κρυπτόν
John iv. 14	γενήσεται	γεννήσεται

In short, the Elzevier text of 1633 betrays no influence of the manuscript of the gospels which Heinsius consulted in preparing his *Aristarchus* and *Exercitationes*. This means that if Heinsius was responsible for assembling the Elzevier text of 1633, he did not esteem it worth while for this purpose to examine a codex which he himself considered, or at least praised, as ‘anti-quissimus’.² Such carelessness in matters of textual criticism should not surprise us very much in Daniel Heinsius, since his editorial practices were not very thorough. For instance, in his *Exercitationes sacrae* (1639) none of the six passages in the gospels where the Elzeviers of 1624 and 1633 vary from each other appears to have been commented upon from a textual critic’s point of view, so that we do not even know whether Heinsius had any opinion on the reading of these passages. He does quote Mark viii. 24 (p. 112), Luke xii. 20 (p. 169) as well as Acts xvii. 18 (p. 307) in a form identical to that of Elzevier 1633 and different from that of 1624, but this betrays rather

¹ H. C. Hoskier, *A Full Account of the Greek Cursive Codex Evangelium 604* (London, 1890), ‘Appendix C’, pp. 24–5, lists fourteen variant readings, two of which we consider as nothing but orthographical variants not deserving of being indicated as ‘real various reading’: (1) Luke xix. 4: συκομορέαν 1624, συκομοράσαν 1633, συκομοράσαν Vatic. Reg. gr. 79; (2) John vii. 42 βηθλεέμ 1624 and Vatic. Reg. gr. 79, βεθλεέμ 1633.

² See the three quotations from Heinsius’ *Aristarchus* in the beginning of this paper.

the editions he used than his judgement on the readings he quotes. Heinsius called attention to only one of the genuine variant readings in which Elzevier 1633 differs from Elzevier 1624 in his *Exercitationes*. In II Tim. i. 12 the Elzevier text of 1624 reads παραθήκην, that of 1633 παρακαταθήκην. Heinsius cites this verse in his *Exercitationes* (p. 524), adopting the reading παραθήκην and adds 'ubi παρακαταθήκην alii. Caeterum, quod pluris est, . . .'. Then follows an exposition on the exact meaning of παραθήκη, but without a word about the value of the variant readings, although the alteration of the παραθήκην of 1624 into the παρακαταθήκην of 1633 is probably due to Daniel Heinsius himself. As a critic of the New Testament Daniel Heinsius was a commentator, presumably also an editor of the commonly received text, but not a collector of variant readings or a person to scrutinize manuscripts after the fashion of the Stephani, Beza or Grotius, who was famous both as a commentator and as a textual critic. As for Daniel Heinsius, we doubt whether he has ever done the humble work of accurately collating any extensive portion of a New Testament manuscript (though he did ask Patrick Young for 'caput unum alterumque, fide optima descriptum' from the Codex Alexandrinus). It is indeed quite significant that, when boasting about the reliability of the Elzevier text of 1633 in his address to the readers, Heinsius fails to state that this text was based on old and trustworthy *manuscripts*, yet alleges that, apart from its being based on some generally respected *editions*, it was the fruit of collaboration by a number of *scholars*!¹

At any rate, Heinsius' 'very old manuscript of the gospels' left no trace in the Elzevier text of 1633; that of 1624 had no manuscript basis whatever. And while Heinsius insists on speaking of his manuscript as 'antiquissimus' (he uses the same word for the Alexandrinus!), the document in fact dates from no earlier than the thirteenth century.² Yet Heinsius' designation is probably more than just ostentation. Twenty years later the manuscript was to be described in exactly the same way in the Antwerp catalogue: independent of Heinsius and having no interest in antedating the manuscript, the author of this list notes: 'exemplar antiquissimum' (see p. 289). In the eyes of seventeenth-century scholars, therefore, a four-centuries-old codex apparently seemed 'very old'. Far from being a disingenuous assertion,³

¹ For Heinsius' views on the textual criticism of the New Testament, see the 'Prolegomena' to the *Exerc. sacrae* (1639), p. 5; (1640), pp. 4-5.

² I am grateful to Mgr Paul Canart, Lector of the Vatican Library, who kindly re-examined the date of the manuscript. From his letter dated 20 August 1972 (see above) I quote: 'L'écriture du Reg. gr. 79 est d'un type archaïsant ou "liturgique" difficile à dater. D'après les parallèles relevés dans l'album d'A. Turyn (Mss. datés du XIII^e et XIV^e s. de la Bibliothèque Vaticane), je la mettrais entre 1250 et 1350, mais il y a deux cahiers d'écriture moins artificielle, les ff. 1-8 et 271-280, que je dateraï plus volontiers du XIII^e siècle.' The same date is given by Stevenson *Bibliothecae Apost. Vaticanae. Corrige K. Aland, Kurzgefaßte Liste der Gr. Handschr. des N.T.* (Berlin, 1963), p. 69, 'Jh.: XIV'.

³ Less ingenuous was Erasmus who, in the title of his *Novum instrumentum*, in a declaration at the end, and again in the dedicatory letter to Leo X, claimed that he had used 'multi utriusque linguae codices, iique veteres', whereas the MSS which he used are of late origin, possibly as late as the

Heinsius' judgement really reflects the palaeographical experience and knowledge of the age, and to condemn its textual naïveté is unhistorical – after all, as late as the nineteenth century no less a personage than F. J. A. Hort himself dated a tenth-century minuscule codex as seventh-century!¹

For the sake of completeness, finally, one should note that Vatic. Reg. gr. 79 preserves no trace of Heinsius' handwriting.² This codex must not be confused with another New Testament manuscript which Heinsius utilized in his *Exercitationes*³ and described as 'antiquissimus': the thirteenth-century Greek-Arabic lectionary L 6, left to Leiden University Library by Jos. Scaliger.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

(1) Our evidence proves beyond doubt that the 'manuscriptus Evangeliorum antiquissimus' of which Daniel Heinsius speaks in his *Aristarchus sacer* (1627; 1639²) and *Exercitationes sacrae* (1639; 1640²) is identical with the manuscript Città del Vaticano, Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, Vatic. Reg. gr. 79.

(2) The manuscript came successively into the possession of Andreas Rivetus (to c. 1621),⁴ Janus Rutgersius (to c. 1624), Daniel Heinsius (c. 1624 to at least 1639), Nicolaas Heinsius (to c. 1649/50), Christina of Sweden (1650–89), Pietro Ottoboni (1689) and the Apostolic Library (1689–).⁵

(3) There is no evidence that this manuscript played any part in establishing the text of the Elzevier Greek Testament of 1633. Comparison of Elzevier 1633 with Vatic. Reg. gr. 79 does not, therefore, corroborate the hypothesis⁶ that Heinsius edited the Elzevier text of 1633.

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fifteenth century. Cf. B. Hall, 'Erasmus, biblical scholar...', in T. A. Dorey (ed.), *Erasmus* (Studies in Latin Literature and its Influence) (London, 1970), p. 96. Erasmus describes his 'codex Reuchlini', which modern scholars attribute to the twelfth century, as so old that it might have been written in the Apostolic age (*Annot. in Rev.* iii. 7). On the other hand, 'antiquissimus' was also Erasmus' designation of the Codex Vaticanus (B) (*Ann. in I John* v. 7).

¹ F. J. A. Hort, 'Ff. 1. 24', in *A Catalogue of the Manuscripts preserved in the Library of the University of Cambridge*, II (Cambridge, 1857), 313: 'handwriting of the VIIth century'! Not every author who used Hort's description noticed the correction on fo. [A7]r.

² Apart from the inscriptions of Rivetus and Nic. Heinsius, the 615 pages of Vatic. Reg. gr. 79 do not contain more Latin than that of two hands of the fifteenth or sixteenth century. One of these is responsible for an interlinear translation on fos. 17v–18r (Matt. v. 14–19) and fos. 237r–243v (John ii. 11–v. 49). The other wrote on fo. 150r, *ad Luke* ii. 1, 'edictum' and on fo. 161r, *ad Luke* v. 17, 'legis doctores'. P. Canart (see above) states: 'Au f. 299v., d'une main du XVI^e siècle, la note *visto p(er) mi summa* (?); ces mots semblent se référer à un compte griffonné sur la même page; il est fort douteux qu'ils visent le texte grec.'

³ *Exerc. sacrae*, pp. 66 and 68.

⁴ That the MS once belonged to Rivetus was known to Gregory, *Textkritik des N.T.*, but he placed this episode in the history of the MS in '1644?', at least twenty years too late.

⁵ We cannot refrain from quoting the sentence in which J. M. A. Scholz, *op. cit.* p. 100, tried to summarize the history of the codex: 'Wahrscheinlich erhielt es von Rutgersius die Königin Christine, und jener von Nicolaus Hemsterhuis.' (Instead of 'Nicolai Heinsii', Scholz had read 'Nicolao Hemst.')

⁶ The hypothesis is confirmed, however, by a testimony of Johann Heinrich Hottinger (1620–67). See our 'The Study of the New Testament in 17th-Century Leiden', to be published on the occasion of the fourth centenary of Leiden University (1975).

A question the assumption that they possessed one common Greek source. The differences are both too great and too small to be accounted for happily on the old hypothesis. No large uniform pattern of differences has emerged. One Gospel is sometimes shorter, sometimes longer; sometimes more Semitic, sometimes less; sometimes avoiding difficulties, sometimes not; sometimes expecting the End to come soon, sometimes not. When individual uniform patterns do emerge, we can assume that the evangelist was responsible – for example, ἐγένετο (δέ) ἐν followed by an articular infinitive seems to be a characteristic expression of Luke. But I have argued that the existence of such isolated patterns is not good warrant for assuming that the other differences, which do not yet fall into order, will eventually yield to our efforts to see them as alterations made by the evangelists to their common Greek source.

I suggest that we allow for other possibilities. If a difference between Matthew and Mark or Luke and Mark does not seem to be accounted for easily on the assumption that Matthew or Luke has altered Mark, we should try two other possibilities. First, we should ask ourselves whether their versions of the common material are not translation-variants of a common Semitic original. Second, we should ask whether either or both their versions of the common material have not suffered independent editorial change before coming to the present form. This is a possibility to be raised with regard to Mark as well as with regard to Matthew or Luke; we should no longer assume that our Mark represents the version from which Matthew and Luke diverged. Mark's Gospel, along with Matthew and Luke, may turn out to be merely one of the products of the transmission of sources, not the one source used by the other two. All three versions of any one incident may now provide evidence to help us reconstruct a source different from each, but closer to the event.

The Synoptic Problem is not one isolated problem to be solved or set aside before tackling the problem of the history of the tradition, or the problem of the theology of the final editors, or the problem of the language in which the sayings and events were first written down. The separation of problems was always a little arbitrary, but, if the arguments I have been putting forward are valid, the Synoptic Problem has now to be seen as part of the other problems.

I want to reopen old questions, and to question old assumptions. The more questions we ask, the more options we keep open, the less likely we are to forget that we study how the sources were handed down not mainly to find out more about the evangelists or more about the church, but mainly in order to know better the things about which the Gospels tell.

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